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# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT MISSION/ASIA

FEBRUARY 2005



*Burmese refugees who have fled or been forced from their homes find health care, classes for their children and other assistance in clinics and programs supported by USAID in refugee areas in Thailand.*

## THAILAND SNAPSHOT

Capital: Bangkok  
Population: 64.9 million  
GDP per person: \$3,000

**For more information,  
see [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)  
Keywords: Regional  
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## OVERVIEW

The United States has important political, economic, strategic and security interests in East and Southeast Asia. As a stable democracy in a tumultuous region, Thailand serves as a model for development and makes a useful base of operations for USAID's regional programs in Southeast Asia. USAID closed its mission in Thailand in 1996, but the ongoing expansion of programs in the greater Mekong region has led to the reestablishment of the mission as a regional hub. USAID's regional programs in Asia focus on



HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, the environment, governance and economic reforms, and special foreign policy interests such as trafficking and humanitarian assistance.

## PROGRAMS

### REGIONAL EFFORTS FIGHT HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS & MALARIA

HIV/AIDS is a growing threat in Asia and the Near East. There are an estimated 8.8 million HIV infections in the region, with rapidly expanding epidemics in China, India, Indonesia, Burma and Vietnam. Youth aged 15-24 account for nearly half of all new cases. Tuberculosis also threatens the working population, especially the poor. Developing countries lose an estimated \$12 billion a year to the disease. Asia and the Near East has 5.3 million new cases a year, more than any other region. Migration across national borders for work is common, leading to the further spread of disease and resistance to anti-malarial drugs.

USAID helps countries in Southeast Asia build their ability to research the disease, keep track of its progress, train researchers and caregivers and provide care for those affected in their communities. With USAID's help, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand began standard surveillance for malaria. USAID also built hospices and provided home-based care for HIV/AIDS patients in Thailand and Burma.

### REGIONAL EFFORTS IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

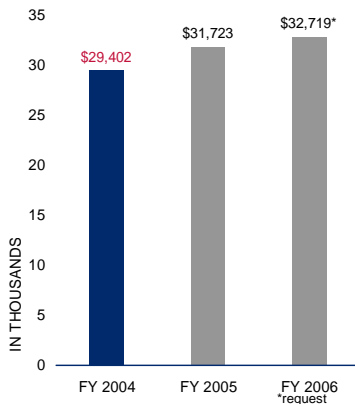
The population of Asia is projected to increase by one billion people by 2025, with most of this growth concentrated in cities. This rapid urbanization already contributes to deteriorating environmental conditions as well as negative health and economic impacts. Through partnerships with governments, businesses, universities, and non-governmental organizations, USAID programs introduce policies, practices, and technologies to address problems in such areas as water quality and supply,



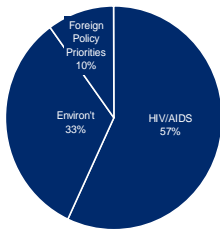
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## REGIONAL PROGRAMS CONTINUED

### USAID ASSISTANCE TO REGIONAL PROGRAMS BASED IN THAILAND



FY 2004 Budget  
Percentage for Each Program Area



Funding: Child Survival and Health  
Funds, Development Assistance,  
Economic Support Funds

air quality, and environmental governance. Beginning in FY 2005, USAID will also strengthen biodiversity conservation and rebuild coastal communities and livelihoods in response to the Tsunami. The regional environment program builds upon its current strengths – facilitating partnerships, leveraging resources, and sharing experiences across the region – and aims to achieve sustainable development impact at the regional level. In FY 2004, USAID supported 144 partnerships and generated \$8.9 million in matching contributions.

### REGIONAL EFFORTS STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMIC REFORM

Technical assistance and training support is needed in the region to solve problems that cross national borders. USAID supports ASEAN to enhance regional economic integration and cooperation, improve regional responses to transnational issues, and strengthen regional security. These are senior-level U.S. policy initiatives that complement the work of other donors.

USAID also builds trade capacity and strengthens regional competitiveness through support for micro, small, and medium businesses; access to credit; legal reform; and microeconomic cluster development. Ongoing trade and investment reform efforts in Vietnam have resulted in a stronger legal framework that will ensure compliance with bilateral trade agreement requirements and World Trade Organization membership.

### REGIONAL EFFORTS ASSIST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

East Asia is a major origin and destination for trafficked people. The U.S. Government estimates that 600,000-800,000 people are trafficked between countries each year. Even more are trafficked internally. USAID works to develop stronger ties among countries in the region on issues related to trafficking and to direct more resources to cross-border initiatives. A multi-year program is underway to develop and maintain standardized data collection; a multi-country monitoring and evaluation system; a focal resource center to collect, store, disseminate and analyze trafficking patterns; and a regional “plan of action” for addressing the demand dynamics of trafficking.

USAID humanitarian programs provide Burmese refugees with access to health care and education; Tibetan communities with resources to sustain their unique cultural heritage; Laotian farmers with alternative crops to opium production; and disabled Vietnamese children, orphans and others with opportunities to lead productive lives.

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